

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

A. Status of the Claims

As a result of the present amendment, claims 1-15 are presented for further prosecution.

B. The Invention

The present invention, as defined by the amended claims, includes a mattress in which the support of a user's body can be adjusted in a manual or automatic manner. In one of the novel aspects of the invention, pressure sensors measure the pressure in one or more air chambers which are not connected to the air inlets. The claimed invention advantageously allows for a better control of the pressure in the mattress, because the pressure in the air chambers connected to the inlets may differ from the pressure in other air chambers of the same group not connected to the air inlets.

C. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 112 and Claim Amendments

The Examiner rejected claims 1-13 as indefinite.

With regards to claim 1, the Examiner stated that it is unclear how pressure in air chambers of one group can be measured differently from air chambers of the same group.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to clarify that the pressure is measured in chambers of a group that are different than chambers of the same group which are connected to air inlets. This aspect of the invention is described, for example, in the paragraph beginning on line 13 of page 2 of the application. In this paragraph, it is explained that various air chambers (the head zone A, the lumbar zone B, the sacral zone C, and the leg zone D) can be composed of 16 rows by 40 columns of individual air chambers. Amended claim 1 specifies that, for example, the pressure sensor measures the pressure in one or more of the many air chambers of group A, wherein such chamber is not connected to an air inlet.

The Examiner rejected claim 4 stating that it is unclear what the pressure sensors and the inlet and/or outlets are on opposite sides of. Applicant has amended claim 4 to recite that the pressure sensors are arranged on one side of the mattress, and the inlets and/or the outlets are

arranged on the opposite side of the mattress. Support for this amendment can be found in Figure 3 of the application.

D. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C § 102 and 35 U.S.C § 103

Claim 1-4, 7 and 13-15 have been rejected as being anticipated by or obvious over Oexman (U.S. 5,848,450).

In order to maintain an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C § 102, the prior art must disclose each and every element of the rejected claims with sufficient clarity to prove its existence in the prior art. In addition, the differences between the claimed invention and prior art must be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to maintain an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C § 103.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention is not anticipated by and is not obvious over Oexman.

1. Oexman does not teach or suggest pressure sensors that measure the pressure in air chambers that are not connected to an air inlet.

Claim 1 recites that the pressure sensors measure the pressure in an air chamber of a group that is different than an air chamber of the same group which is connected to an air inlet. Claim 1 therefore recites that the pressure sensors and the inlets are not connected to the same air chamber of a particular group.

Oexman does not teach or suggest a pressure sensor in an air chamber of a group that is different than an air chamber of the same group which is connected to an air inlet as recited in claim 1. Instead, Oexman teaches that the pressure is measured in the same air chamber that is connected to the air inlet. As shown in Figure 1 of Oexman, inflation valves 35a-38a and pressure sensors 55-58 are respectfully connected to ports 45-48. Thus, the inflation valves 35a-38a and pressure sensors 55-58 are necessarily connected to the same air chamber, because they are interconnected through common ports 45-48 upstream of the air chambers. Therefore, contrary to claim 1, Oexman does not teach or suggest a pressure sensor that measures pressure in an air chamber of a group that is different than an air chamber of the same group which is connected to an air inlet. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that Oexman does not disclose

each and every element of the claimed invention with sufficient clarity as required to maintain an anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C § 102.

Applicant also respectfully submits that the claimed invention is not obvious based on the teachings of Oexman. As disclosed in the present application, the pressure in an air chamber connected to an inlet may differ from the pressure in another air chamber of the same group which is not connected to an inlet. The mattress of the claimed invention therefore advantageously provides better pressure control, because the pressure sensor is connected to an air chamber of a group which is not the same air chamber connected to an inlet.

Oexman does not explain that the pressure can be controlled in an advantageous manner when using a mattress that falls within the scope of the claimed invention. Consequently, Oexman provides no teaching, suggestion or motivation for one skilled in the art to produce the claimed invention. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claimed invention is not obvious under 35 U.S.C § 103, because the differences between the claimed invention and Oexman would not be obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

2. Claim 4

Claim 4 recites that the pressure sensors are arranged on one side of the mattress, and the inlets and/or the outlets are arranged on the opposite side of the mattress. This aspect of the present invention is illustrated in Figure 3, which shows pressure sensors 20 on one side of chambers A, B, C, D, and inlet valves 16 and outlet valves 17 on the opposite side of chambers A, B, C, D. When employing such a configuration, pressure control can be further enhanced because the pressure sensor is located substantially away from, and is not affected by the air inlets and/or the air outlets.

Oexman does not teach or suggest the limitations of claim 4. Instead, as discussed above, inflation valves 35a-38a, deflation valves 35b-38b, and pressure sensors 55-58 of Oexman are each respectively connected through common ports 45-48 to a single side of the air chambers. Oexman therefore does not teach or suggest pressure sensors arranged on the opposite side of the mattress in relation to the inlets and/or the outlets as recited in claim 4.

It is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is not anticipated by and is not obvious over Oexman

E. Dependant Claims

Claim 5 had been rejected as being on unpatentable in Oexman in view of Higgs (U.S. file 5,249,319). Claims 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 have been rejected as being on unpatentable over Oexman in view of Graebe (U.S. 5,596,781). Claim 10 had been rejected as being on unpatentable over Oexman in view of Everard (U.S. 5,142,717).

Claims 3-15 ultimately depend upon claim 1. Higgs, Graebe and Everard did not cure the deficiencies of Oexman with respect to claim 1. It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the claims are patentable over the cited references taken alone or in combination.

F. Conclusion

In view of the actions taken and arguments presented, it is respectfully submitted that each and every one of the matters raised by the Examiner has been addressed by the present amendment and that the present application is now in condition for allowance.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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